

**Dawit Meseret (Harar – 3<sup>rd</sup> prize winner)**

Ever since the beginning of time, there was a strong belief that man was created for a purpose. Whether we're religious or non-believers, we all seem to agree on this sense of "Destiny". The great Abraham Lincoln had a purpose in this world to free all slaves thus by declaring the equality of all men and many African Americans. After that, the world was influenced in many ways. Mignon Lorraine Innis was one of those many black people who helped changed the world. She played a huge role in the development of education in Ethiopia and she cofounded and served on the board of directors of several transformational organizations.

Mignon Lorraine Innis immigrated to Ethiopia in the 1930's and founded the very first co-educational school in the country. The school was the first and the only one of its kind and immediately grasped the attention and recognition of the king and queen, leading to the donation of larger grounds to expand the school.

In the meantime, Mrs. Ford made several trips to the United States to find ways to get help and financial support from American supporters. She also petitioned the Ministry of Education to hire Peace Corps teachers, and finally expanding the school to make it an elementary and secondary school.

In addition, Mrs. Ford also co-founded and served on the board of directors of several political organizations that helped shape the political vie of the ancient land and its eager people. Mrs. Ford's death was a national loss in Ethiopia and led to the re-naming of the school, "The Mignon Lorraine Innis Ford School".

Simply put Mrs. Ford was in so many ways a 'people's helper', no one can ever conclude her deeds were insufficient. Most people would agree on the character she played as not only a teacher but a heroine, who was strong in spirit and felt content in helping people and saving their souls.